

Headquarters East



Labor-Management Partnership Council

Council Minutes

April 14, 1999

2 – 4 p.m.

Approved:

 5/20/99
Management Co-Chair / date

 5/20/99
Union Co-Chair / date

The meeting began at approximately 2:15 p.m. Council members attending were the following for management: Richard Crooke, Jennifer Hovencamp, Katherine Ciacco-Palatianos, and Mary Beth Skupien. The LIUNA Union members present were: Ann Brown, Balerna Burgess, Bonnie Matheson, and Kathleen Patterson.

MINUTES REVIEW: The meeting opened with a brief announcement that the minutes from the February meeting would be made available at the May meeting. There was no meeting in March.

QUALITY WORKLIFE PLAN: The third item on the agenda was to further discuss the Quality of Worklife Plan for Headquarters East. Ms. Sara Matte, Director, Division of Human Resources, and Mr. Alan Myers were invited to attend the meeting to address questions, state their expectations for the Headquarters East plan, etc. Ms. Matte went over the IHS-wide QWL plan. The IHS-wide plan has five elements, which follow the HHS QWL plans elements. The expectation for the Headquarters East QWL plan is for the plan to use the elements, and more elements can be added.

The IHS elements are:

Emphasize communication between employees and supervisors and interactive communication between the IHS Director and senior leaders and employees.

Implement family-friendly programs – especially those that help employees manage their work schedule and help ensure quality care for dependents.

Strengthen work place learning, with an emphasis on identifying and developing the knowledge and skills that will be needed for the future of the agency, strengthening management and supervision abilities, and building the foundation for a learning organization.

Manage diversity and make diversity a source of performance excellence.

Plan and manage change and transition and develop the internal capacity of the IHS to facilitate change.

Ms. Matte stated that the Headquarters East QWL plan is needed as soon as possible. Ms. Matte and Mr. Myers volunteered to provide the Council and the sub-committee assistance in the development of the plan and its subsequent implementation. When developing the scope of the HQE QWL plan, efforts should be concentrated on

those items or activities that can be achieved. The members reviewed some previous QWL work, the issue of improving communication that the Council accomplished during their September 1998 training session.

Ms. Matte expressed an expectation that the Council would develop a mechanism for placing the QWL plan on the web-site and keep it up-to-date. The QWL web-site, she suggested, should also post the Index survey results. The IHS does have a QWL web site, the Council members need to review it and see if it can be improved, etc. QWL questions also raised included: Should the QWL question box be continued? Should an Employee Association be developed?

The QWL sub-committee members are Donna Anderson, Carl Harper, Nina Miller, Jeanelle Raybon, and Toye Warito.

The council agreed to meet with the sub-committee members on May 5 from 2-4p.m.

EMPLOYEE SATISFACTION INDEX SURVEY: Ms. Matte provided copies of the latest results of the Human Resources Management Index survey of employees, which included the Overall IHS and Headquarters results. The index is a composite of various work environmental factors including morale, climate for innovation, planning and organization, communication and operational efficiency. Ms. Matte provided a detailed explanation of the results. A significant result was that an overall strength of the IHS was the use of employee abilities. The index did point out three major weaknesses in Headquarters. They are that management practices are ineffective, rarely are employee's energies and abilities used, and there is little sharing among co-workers. The IHS' positive trend has decreased from the last index and the IHS was the lowest in HHS. The HHS has used the index survey since 1989. The three lowest results for the entire IHS were from the following questions:

1. Are there any signs of employee discontent (sick leave abuse, complaints or arguments)? *Index result: 55% of the employees said that there were some or quite a lot of signs of discontent in their group.*

2. Are people treated fairly with regard to training opportunities, length of lunch periods, leave, etc. (Fairness of Management)? *Index result: 34% of the employees said they were only sometimes or rarely treated fairly.*

3. Are there any continuing problems that reduce the efficiency of your work group (Operational Efficiency)? *Index result: 67% of the employees said that more than a few continuing problems reduced efficiency.*

There were 19 questions on the index. Questions 15 through 19 were specific to the QWL and their results were not included in the trend. The codes for Headquarters are 1201 for everyone in Headquarters (East, West, Seattle, Dallas, etc.). A bar graph is not provided for entities that receive less than 100 responses. Ms. Matte encouraged the Council to have the survey results and how the survey is distributed to Headquarters employees discussed with the QWL sub-committee and for us to develop recommendations on how it is distributed. HHS would like each OPDIV to have the survey results disseminated to all employees.

It was suggested that focus groups or a follow-up survey be conducted to gather suggestions on how to address these weaknesses. The question for the sub-committee is how can we address these results in the Headquarters East QWL plan and how can we find out why we have received such a low score?

The index scores have consistently shown that our (IHS-wide) supervisors need training, that is why the IHS-wide QWL plan is focused on supervisory training and especially the Leadership in Context (LINC) course. This course has already been started in the Bemidji, Tucson, Aberdeen Navajo Area and the Phoenix Indian Medical Center. The 3-part LINC course will be offered at Headquarters and the Council and QWL sub-committee is invited to attend the first session. The first session is scheduled for 1999 from June 29 - July 1; July 27 - 29; and August 17 - 20. A description of the different parts is attached.

The Council agreed by consensus to attend the first session of the LINC course.

UPDATE OF NATIONAL PARTNERSHIP COUNCIL: The fourth agenda item was an update on the IHS National Union-Management Partnership Council. The National Council met on March 25 and 26. Their Charter was signed and they developed their agenda. The National Council agreed that they would only be reviewing national issues and no local issues.

TELEPHONE SYSTEM: The fifth agenda item was the new telephone system. A copy of the new installation schedule was provided. The Union members expressed concern that they were not receiving advance copies of the schedule and the change in the vendor for voice mail. They inquired as to where the notification was regarding the change from Octel. Why the change in voice mail vendor. Also concerns were raised regarding Dr. Trujillo's

electronic message to all employees in which he is requiring a person to answer phones and for them to not automatically switch to the voice mail. For some offices, the new telephone system initiates voice mail before other employees are able to intercept the call. The new system does not allow for employee to be in compliance with this directive. ? Management stated that they would look into the matter.

TWINBROOK SERVICES: The sixth agenda item was the problems being experienced by Twinbrook employees. The janitorial staff does not speak English and IHS staff has been directed to post signs in Spanish. The hot water was turned off and has remained off in the fourth and sixth floor kitchens. The heat pump for water on the sixth floor has not been replaced. There was ice on the sidewalks without any apparent attempts to remove it. The question was posed as to the method for obtaining maintenance at the Twinbrook building when DAS staff are not available. Management responded that they would check with the Leasing, Trizec Hahn, and ask them to notify us of changes.

TWINBROOK SECURITY: The seventh item was a concern the Union raised regarding the security system at the Twinbrook building. It was felt that the security does not promote trust among employees because employees and non-employees have to be screened to enter IHS spaces. Only non-IHS employees should be screened. A request was made to inquire into the cost to have all IHS space entrances to be equipped with a swipe card mechanism for access.

EPMS TRACKING: Copies of the EPMS tracking graphs were provided. These charts are in response to the LMPC request.

The meeting adjourned at 4:00 p.m.